

Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area Interagency Trail Management Plan (TMP)
The interagency follow-up to SMMART (Santa Monica Mountains Area Recreational Trails Project)
"Creating a Common Vision"

Background

- SMMART project, a public scoping exercise sponsored by NPS-RTCA, began in late 1995 and culminated in the final report in September, 1997. Report offered series of recommendations for the SMMNRA trail network.
- In November, 1998, managers and staff from State Parks, Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, and National Park Service convened a workshop to discuss how to proceed with preparing an agency-sanctioned trail management plan. "Planning Team" and "Management Team" committees were assigned.

TMP Planning Team Work

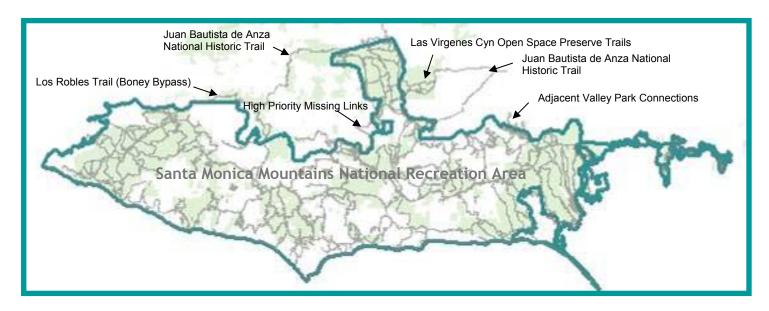
Over the next several years, the TMP Team and other staff carried out a number recreational resource inventories and studies, as listed in the table below. Please note the Trail Inventory also includes an inventory of all park entrance points (authorized and unauthorized) and trailhead facilities.



Conceptual Alternatives—Highlights

Study Area

- 797 miles of recreational routes: trails, dirt roads, paved roads
- Includes all trail routes within SMMNRA and some regional trails, critical missing links, and neighborhood connections outside SMMNRA



Features Addressed in Each Alternative

Recreational Routes	Recreational Facilities			
1 Status - Physical Trail Network	1 Trail Signage			
2 Use Designation	2 Trailheads			
3 ADA Opportunities	3 Backbone Trail Backcountry Camps			
4 Backbone Trail & Other Regional Systems				

Note: Recreation Routes refer to all types of facilities used for recreational use, including trails constructed as trails, dirt utility/fire service roads, and paved roads. Although the "Trail" Plan encompasses all the different facilities as "trails," it should be understood that trails, dirt roads, and paved roads have different management needs. Dirt and paved roads may be encumbered with and managed by non-park easement holders.

Recreational Routes - STATUS

Current Conditions

Existing Official Recreational Network with Established Public Right-of-Way:	484 Miles
Existing Unofficial Recreational Routes - No Public Right-of-Way	219 Miles
Total On-the-Ground Recreational Routes - Not All Have Public Right-of-Way	703 Miles

Status: Current Conditions - Existing Official Recreational Trail Network

Recreational Feature	NPS	DPR	SMMC/MRCA	Other Parks	Private	Total
Trail	70	113	31	29	42	286
Dirt Road	44	62	32	22	9	169
Paved Road	4	8	2	5	11	29
Total	118	183	65	56	62	484 miles

Status: Current Conditions - Existing Unofficial Recreational Routes

Recreational Feature	NPS	DPR	SMMC/MRCA	Other Parks	Private	Total
Trail	18.9	22.5	21.8	14.1	27.2	104.5
Dirt Road	8.8	2.7	11.2	5.4	28.0	56.1
Paved Road	0.5	1.3	0.2	1.3	7.0	10.3
Total	28.2	26.5	33.2	20.8	62.2	219 miles

Proposed Alternatives

- The biggest challenge for the agencies when preparing the draft trail map alternatives has been balancing recreational access with resource protection.
- All TMP alternatives propose to <u>increase the mileage</u> of public recreational opportunities while improving <u>environmental sustainability</u> through a) securing public ROW over unofficial trails, b) constructing durable new trails, c) realigning problem trails, and d) closing unauthorized trails.
- There appears to be a significant increase in the proposed trail network the park agencies would manage. The increase is largely caused by securing the public right-of-way over pre-existing dirt roads and unofficial trails. Therefore, the change needs to be viewed in terms of change from the sum total of existing official network and unofficial recreational routes: the current "physical" network. The increase in the public trail network is not solely brought about by new trail construction.

Conceptual Alternative Mileage:	Alternative Mileage: Balancing Recreational Access with Resource Protection							
	Alternatives - Miles							
	Current Low High Hybrid							
Proposed Public Network	484	648	732	704				
% Change in Public Access		+34%	+51%	+45%				
Total Current Trails/Roads	703							
% Change in Physical Network		-8%	+4%	0%				

Recreational Routes - USE DESIGNATION

- TMP recognizes that a multiple-use trail recreational experience is different than a hiker-only or hiker equestrian trail experience. Additionally, a utility/fire road recreational experience is different than a trail-based recreational experience. The different experiences have been taken into consideration when prescribing use designation.
- Existing official trail network & use designation remains mostly unchanged among all alternatives.
- Most significant change is redesignation to multiple use of the Backbone Trail, except in Boney Wilderness.
- Hybrid and High Impact alternatives feature multiple-use Conejo Peak Trail to bypass Boney Mountain Wilderness.
- Other change concerns assigning use designation to existing unofficial trails & proposed new trails.
- Overall, there is minimal change in the proportions of multiple-use, hiker-equestrian, and hiker-only trails.
- Hybrid alternative features slight increase in multiple-use trails (60% up to 64%).
- High Impact alternative features largest shift to multiple-use designation (73%).
- Low Impact alternative features reduction in multiple use designation (60% down to 52%).
- Trail network east of 405 stays substantially unchanged and remains almost entirely hiker-only.

Use Designation	Current		Low		High		Hybrid	
	Mileage	%	Mileage	%	Mileage	%	Mileage	%
Multi-Use	290	60%	339	52%	532	73%	451	64%
Hiker/Equestrian	96	20%	193	30%	92	13%	144	20%
Hiker Only	97	20%	115	18%	106	14%	108	15%
Total Network	484	100%	648	100%	732	100%	704	100%

Recreational Routes - DOG POLICY

• Dog policy will be addressed in the future as a separate process from the Trail Management Plan. Current agency policy for dogs on trail will remain unchanged.

Recreational Routes - ADA OPPORTUNITIES

- All Alternatives prioritize keeping trails that have ADA potential open.
- Hybrid & High Impact Alternatives propose constructing "Asphalt Hill" bypass trail that meets ADA standards, but is open to all users.
- All alternatives introduce "Advanced Opportunities" for more ambitious Americans with Disabilities.

Opportunity	Current	Hybrid	High	Low
Existing ADA-Standard Trails	9	9	9	9
Minor Adjustments to Meet ADA Standards		4	4	4
New Trail Construction to Meet ADA Standards		5	5	4
Advanced Opportunities		20	20	19
Totals	9	38	38	36

Recreational Routes - REGIONAL TRAILS

- "Regional" trail connotes a recreational connection from one side of the recreation area to the other. The trail may also be of state or national significance. There are five proposed regional trails across the SMMNRA study area: the Backbone Trail and four others.
 - *Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail*: TMP plans for signage and completing the alignment across the Simi Hills, Conejo Open Space Conservation Authority (COSCA) lands, and Rancho Sierra Vista. Alignment is mostly present with some signage. Present in all TMP alternatives.



- *California Coastal Trail*: A state-legislated trail that is fully accessible across the coast of SMMNRA at low tide. TMP agencies will work in cooperation with other state agencies and non-profit organizations to accomplish trail signage, access, and promotion. Present in all TMP alternatives.



- Coastal Slope Trail: Long-envisioned trail (1983 L.A. County Master Trail Plan) to run along coastal slope areas above Malibu, maintaining stunning views of the coast as much as possible. Trail is also to be used as a California Coastal Trail alternate when walkers cannot wait for low tide for coastal access. Segments of the trail are already open to the public. Present in all TMP alternatives, and represents the majority of proposed new trail and trailhead construction.



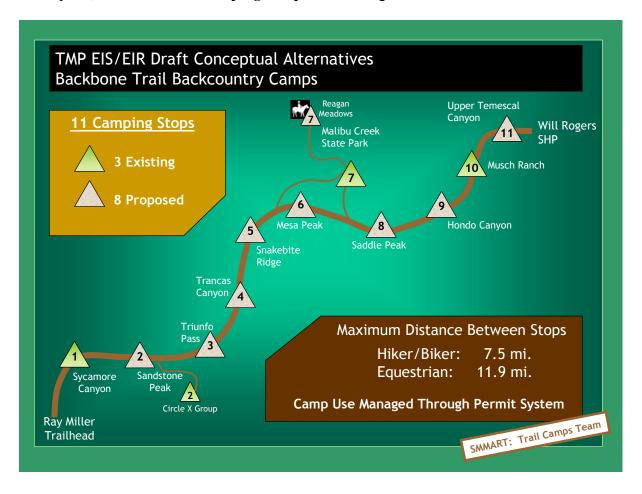
- Zuma Ridge Trail aka Simi-to-the-Sea Trail: Trail proposed to connect Simi Valley to the coast in north-south fashion (L.A. County Master Trail Plan and Simi Hills Comprehensive Design Plan). Trail only proposed for full length in High Impact alternative owing to the presence of other trails that would provide connection, but would not be in an alignment worthy of the proposed name.



- Only the Backbone Trail is slated for backcountry camps.
- Only the Backbone Trail and de Anza Trail have unique logos for posting on signage.

Recreational Facilities - BACKBONE TRAIL BACKCOUNTRY CAMPS

- Hybrid & High Impact alternatives feature full complement of camps.
- Low Impact alternative proposes no new camp construction.
- When complete, there will be 11 camping "stops." See image below.



- Other camp locations that may be constructed depending on funding and demand include:
 - Cold Creek Campground (MRT-owned Voiss Property)
 - Randa House location (after demolition and site clean-up)
- All camps would have toilets (technology would vary).
- All equestrian camps would have a water source, with an administrative road to service the water source.
- Backcountry camps would accommodate up to 12 persons divided among three or four camp sites. Equestrian camp capacity may vary depending on site conditions.
- The camp network would be managed through a permit reservation system.

Recreational Facilities - TRAILHEADS

- All alternatives retain most existing trailheads. All closures are problematic unofficial park entrances. The only popular unofficial trailhead to be closed is the parking at any corner of the LasVirgenes/Mulholland Highway intersection.
- Most new trailheads are associated with access to the Backbone Trail and proposed Coastal Slope Trail.
- Three new primary trailheads are planned, including at Gillette Ranch. Victory Trailhead would be an upgrade from secondary to primary.

TMP EIS/EIR Draft Conceptual Alternatives — Trailheads Trailhead Rank Trailhead Rank Hybrid Current High Primary: Heavy Use, Usually with **Full Complement of Amenities** Secondary: Heavy Use Only, or **Moderate Use with Limited Amenities Tertiary** 88 93 93 88 Tertiary: Low use, Generally No 143 143 **Total** 130 130 Amenities, Sometimes No Parking **Primary** Secondary **Tertiary**^a **Proposed New** Proposed Newb **Proposed New** 1. Gillette Ranch (Future 1. Shea Open Space at 1. BBT - Mulholland Hwy 10. CST - Malibu Canyon Park Headquarters and Thousand Oaks Bl., ^ Francisco Ranch 2. BBT - Encinal Cyn Rd Visitor Center) Calabasas 11. CST - Latigo Canyon 3. BBT - Piuma Road 2. Dirt Mulholland Western Rank Upgrade Road 4. BBT - Saddle Peak Rd Gateway 2. Pentachaeta Trailhead, 12. Hennesy Property 5. BBT - Yerba Buena Rd Rank Upgrade Westlake Village 13. Palo Comado 6. CST - Lower Topanga 3. Victory Boulevard (Main 3. Wild Walnut Park, Cyn/Chesebro Cyn Trailhead Entrance to Las Calabasas Road 7. CST - Encinal Cyn Rd Virgenes Canyon Open 4. Dirt Mulholland Eastern 14. Tuna Cyn Road 8. CST - Las Flores Cyn Space Preserve) Gateway 15. Topanga/Paradise 9. CST - LADWP Property 4. Westward Beach Road 5. Malibu Riding & Tennis Lane at Zuma Lagoon Club (Open to Public) 16. Morrison Ranch (Parklink Shuttle Stop) a. Tertiary trailheads may not 6. Malibu Bluffs, Michael 17. Tuna Cyn Road have parking. Landon Center (Future "New" also includes existing 18. Calabasas Mtwy ^ Satellite Visitor Center) informal park entrances. Old Topanga Cyn Rd

Recreational Facilities - SIGNAGE

- A joint regulatory Trail Rules sign has been prepared by the TMP planning team and approved by NPS and CDPR management. The sign conveys rule statements acceptable under state and federal law enforcement authorities, agency logos, NPS as the general contact with phone/web information, Angeles Dispatch as the emergency contact, and use designation placards for horse, bike, and dog policy.
- The joint Trail Rules sign applies only to trailheads west of the 405 and south of the 101.
- Text layout standards for directional signage are proposed. Signs will have trail name, possible secondary name, and distances to the next two significant intersections or destination points.



